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Attention
Keep this study together.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

October 12, 1974

Dear Mr. Meany:

Thank you for your letter of September 9 to the Secretary advising that the AFL-CIO would be strongly opposed to the admission of the Palestine Liberation Organization to observer or any other status in the United Nations, the ILO, or any other UN agency. I reply in the absence of the Secretary who is in the Middle East.

As you are aware, the Arab members of the United Nations have undertaken a carefully orchestrated campaign to obtain international recognition for the PLO by securing its participation, as an observer, in the meetings of organizations within the UN system. The Arabs have also agreed to work for an invitation to the PLO to appear in the UN General Assembly later this Fall when the Palestinian item is debated there.

So far, the PLO has by strong majorities obtained observer status in the Universal Postal Union, the International Telecommunications Union, and the World Health Organization. Furthermore, the executive bodies of both UNESCO and the International Civil Aviation Organization have just approved recommendations that their general meetings, both currently in session, invite the PLO to attend as an observer.

Mr. George Meany,
American Confederation of Labor and
Congress of Industrial Organizations,
815 Sixteenth Street, N.W.,
Washington, D.C.

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Our position on this question is and has been that we are opposed to, and have voted against, any direct invitation to the PLO to participate as an observer in meetings of UN specialized agencies. We have also opposed any such invitation, however tendered, which specifically names the PLO. In order to forestall the adoption of more undesirable formulae we have not opposed resolutions which permit the attendance as observers at international meetings of representatives of groups recognized by regional intergovernmental organizations such as the Organization of African Unity and the League of Arab States, the latter of which recognizes the PLO.

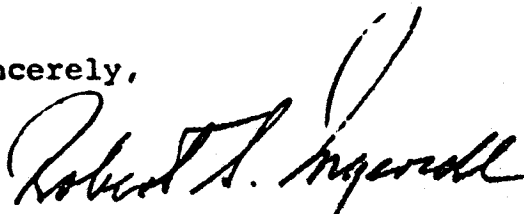
As a result of current instructions based on this policy, our delegation to the recent UNESCO Executive Board Meeting voted against a resolution recommending that the UNESCO General Conference extend a direct invitation to the PLO. Furthermore, particularly because of the involvement of constituent units of the PLO in air piracy, our delegation to ICAO voted for an Israeli motion opposing a formula which would have allowed the PLO to participate in a regional ICAO meeting.

We expect that the UN General Assembly's decision on the question of PLO attendance there will already have been reached by the time the ILO Governing Body convenes on November 12. That decision is therefore central to our strategy at the ILO Governing Body. However, we have already instructed our mission in Geneva to inform the Director General of ILO of the AFL-CIO's views on this question, as communicated in your letter, and to support those views with an expression of the firm belief of the United States that there is no basis for according observer status in the ILO to the PLO as long as it is requested in its own name rather than under the formula described above which calls for sponsorship by regional intergovernmental organizations.

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The Secretary also has kept, and will keep, the contents of your letter very much in mind in his recent and current discussions with Israeli and Arab leaders. In these discussions, he has had, however, to confront the hard fact that the PLO's Arab and other sponsors have the votes to achieve their purpose. His efforts, therefore, have been directed to ensuring that the actions taken concerning the PLO in bodies within the UN system and above all in the General Assembly, do not endanger the process of peacemaking in the Middle East which is of paramount concern to all of us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Robert S. Ingersoll". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping initial "R".

Robert S. Ingersoll
Acting Secretary